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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5104

INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RHMFIS/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU PRIORITY

RHMFIS/425ABG IZMIR TU//CC// PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHMFIS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

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RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP:PDUSDP/ISA:EUR/ISA:NESA/DSCA// PRIORITY

RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU PRIORITY

RUEUITH/TLO ANKARA TU PRIORITY

RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEPGAB/MNF-I C2X BAGHDAD IZ PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 000191

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DEPT. FOR EUR/SE AND NEA/I

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/01/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: GOT PRESSES IRAQI TURKMEN TO RETURN TO KIRKUK  
PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

REF: ANKARA 183

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Classified By: DCM Nancy McEldowney for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[11](#). (C) SUMMARY: GOT officials are pressing Iraqi Turkmen members of the Kirkuk Provincial Council to end their boycott and resume involvement in council deliberations. The Turks recognize it is in the interests of the Iraqi Turkmen people that their elected representatives participate in the political process. They emphasized this point to the visiting council members during meetings in Ankara. At the same time, GOT officials believe Iraqi Turkmen have legitimate complaints regarding their absence from positions of power in the province and the poor level of services the Kurdish-controlled administration provides to the Turkmen community. The Turks also appreciate USG attempts to find common ground among all communities in Kirkuk. The GOT has a better understanding of SRS de Mistura's goal regarding Kirkuk and looks forward to consulting with him. The GOT is likely to convey an invitation to Iraqi President Talabani to visit Ankara soon, and looks forward to visits of GOI Ministers of Trade and Water in the near future. On the Neighbors process, the GOT hopes to host a meeting of the energy working group, along with a trilateral meeting on Iraqi gas, in early March. The Kuwaitis reportedly are moving forward with a late-April date for the next expanded Neighbors ministerial. END SUMMARY

[12](#). (C) GOT Iraq Coordinator Celikkol provided Charge on January 31 a read-out of GOT meetings with nine Iraqi Turkmen members of the Kirkuk Provincial Council who visited Ankara the week of January 21. Celikkol said he and other GOT officials encouraged the council members to end their boycott, noting the Turkmen community are hurting themselves by not participating in the political process. Celikkol added that Iraqi Turkmen have legitimate complaints about the way the community has been excluded from positions of power in the province and urged that some of the council members'

requests be met. If they get something, it will be much easier for them to return to the council -- and much easier for the GOT to push them to do so.

13. (C) Celikkol provided a paper outlining GOT understanding of the Turkmen position. Entitled "Demands of the Turkoman Members of the Kirkuk Provincial Council," (scanned and e-mailed to Embassy Baghdad, NEA/I, and EUR/SE) it is, per Celikkol, more a list of "requests" than "demands." From the GOT point of view, they do not represent take-it- or-leave-it proposals, but rather a series of actions that would demonstrate to the Turkmen community that they are being treated fairly. Celikkol noted the Turkmen council members had praised the work of PRT Kirkuk leader Howard Keegan, saying he had carried out negotiations in a fair and even-handed manner, for which Celikkol expressed GOT appreciation.

14. (C) Most of the paper represents items on which PRT Kirkuk committed to the Turkmen it would help press the Kurds in order to gain Turkmen agreement to return to the council, including:

- Inclusion of text in Turkmen on signs of the Kirkuk Governor's Bureau;
- Recommendation to the Executive Committee that Turkmen be one of the official languages of Kirkuk Province;
- Recommendation that the Turkmen Bloc be given three positions of importance to reflect their population density in the urban areas of Kirkuk Province; to include,
  - a second Deputy Provincial Council Chairman position,
  - a position of Advisor to the Governor for Urban Affairs, focused on assisting the Governor to determine priorities and needs of the population of Kirkuk City,
  - Turkmen Bloc seeking the position of Kirkuk City Mayor

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during the first local elections, and

- Kirkuk City Council Chairman of a newly created city council;
- Commitment by the Kirkuk Provincial Council Executive Committee to implement the 32% distribution of Directors General and staff model, to be established within a negotiated timeframe;
- Commitment by the Executive Committee to establish a judicial process by which land disputes and land claims can be adjudicated in accordance with the Iraqi Constitution and law, again to be established within a negotiated period of time; and
- As negotiated in the agreement with the Kirkuk Brotherhood List and Arab Bloc, formation of a high commission comprising two members from each list participating in the agreement to discuss issues that may create obstacles in the political process and find consensus solutions, provided that PRT Kirkuk participates in the follow-up process of implementation of the agreement.

15. (C) Celikkol indicated that in addition to these points, the Turkmen have also requested four positions be "allocated" to them:

- Deputy Governor in charge of technical affairs (a second Deputy Governor position)
- Kirkuk City Mayor
- Kirkuk Health Director General
- Kirkuk Province Food Distribution Director General

16. (C) Charge promised to forward the document to those discussing these issues directly with the Turkmen. She reiterated the USG position that the council members should be debating these points with their Iraqi Kurdish and Arab colleagues in council deliberations. She urged Celikkol and the GOT to continue to press this point with the Turkmen.

¶17. (C) Celikkol said the GOT may have misunderstood SRS de Mistura's goals for Kirkuk. The Turks initially understood de Mistura's comments to mean his goal is to prepare the way for a referendum by June 2008. After consultations with S/I Satterfield, GOT officials better understand the USG and UN goal of establishing a process during that time frame that will lead to a consensus decision on the future of Kirkuk, be it achieved via referendum or some other agreed upon mechanism. Celikkol said the GOT had conveyed an invitation to de Mistura to visit Ankara to consult on this and other Iraq-related issues and the Turks look forward to his visit, though no dates have yet been set. Celikkol referred to an upcoming conference on Kirkuk, taking place in Amman, at which representatives of all three major communities in Kirkuk will be represented. He said such events are an encouraging that efforts are being made to reach consensus.

#### GOI/GOT Engagement

¶18. (C) Charge asked about the status of an invitation to President Talabani to visit Ankara, expressing hope that such a visit will take place very soon. Celikkol said the visit will happen, but could not offer a specific date. Celikkol noted Iraq's Minister of Trade plans to travel to Ankara o/a February 16. GOT officials hope he will be able to sign an economic cooperation framework agreement during that visit. He also informed Charge of plans for a conference on the Mosul Dam being organized by Iraq's Minister of Water, taking place the week of February 4 in Istanbul, and of the presence of 60 members of the Iraqi Islamic Party who are currently receiving administrative training in Turkey.

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#### Neighbors

¶19. (C) Celikkol said the GOI had agreed to dates proposed by the GOT for the next meeting of the Neighbors Process Energy Working Group (reftel). The GOT hopes to be able to hold a trilateral (IZ-TU-US) meeting on Iraqi gas around the same March 1-4 time frame in Istanbul, and is flexible about the order in which those take place. Regarding the next expanded ministerial in Kuwait, MFA told us the Kuwaitis have now conveyed what the GOT views as a formal invitation for April ¶22. FM Babacan cannot participate on April 22 and the GOT has gone back to the Kuwaitis to indicate April 23 would work better. The GOT recognizes the USG's preference was for the next ministerial to take place at the end of March, but it seems the Kuwaitis are moving ahead with a late April proposal.

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